One line from the film *August Rush* captures my attention time and time again. The young boy August whispers, “The music is all around us, we only have to listen.” A poetic and provocative insight, I hear an expansive invitation to tune into my life particularities and the world around me. How do I define the music and vibrations around me? What must I do to learn to listen clearly? A question for me, and thus possibly for you emerges: “What music plays in and through my life?”

If living life creates music, and it is around and within us, what daily sounds and rhythms bring joy, harmony, and cadence into your life? What music creates a disturbing cacophony, jarring your soul? Where do you experience moments of solace, soul renewal, and rest? How do you react to inevitable discord, broken hope, clashes of personality and intent? What life rhythms weave and play throughout your active and dreaming hours? Can you afford the time to listen?

Rhythms of our daily life activities bestow or destroy life. In this time of world unrest, distrust, and confusion, we have a choice—a critical choice: either create rhythms of living that will move us into deeper healing and wholeness, or else contribute to shadowland fragmentations of mistrust and fear. Richard Rohr, OFM, says, “How we do anything is how we do everything.” Therefore, how we choose to listen and live our daily choices can create a melody—or not. To be deliberate about what plays through the notes of our primary relationships, work life, play, prayer, service, and within our deepest self or soul is a deeply spiritual and human activity.

Compose your life story or create a playlist from the framework of *here and now*. What emerges? Tune in, and listen to what you compile. To help you begin, first breathe deeply and contemplate your inner state of being. Then—with kindness—peruse your calendar and commitments. Pay attention to how you spend or splurge your time. Notice areas of energy and consolation, drain, and concern. Ask:

- What daily rhythms play in me?
- Could I use some fine tuning?
- Can I harmonize or even jam with others?
- When does my soul hum with vitality and life?
- Who teaches and inspires me?
- Is the music around and within rousing me to something more?
- Listen to your life. Listen to the music all around you. What do you discover?
- Will you add your unique rhythm to the healing, wholeness, compassion and justice showing up in our world?

—Pegge Bernecker
Pecos Benedictine Monastery

is offering two residential programs in 2009. The School of Spiritual Direction, which highly values the experience of personal transformation, is completed in three 2-week modules over one, two, or three years. Students reside at the Abbey guesthouse adjacent to the monastery, east of Santa Fe. Phase I will be offered June 28-July 10, Phase II will be September 13-25, and Phase III will be November 8-20. A three month Sabbatical Renewal Program allows persons to follow their own process, encouraging involvement but recognizing the need to withdraw. The aim is to integrate workshops; seminars; prayer and recreation into a holistic experience which will help one see God in all of life, relationships, and oneself. Offered September 3 – December 4. For information please call, e-mail or write: Stephen Coffey, OSB Administrator
P.O. Box 1080 Pecos, NM 87552-1080 505-575-6415 ext.
221 spiritdir@pecosmonastery.org
See www.pecosmonastery.org for details

St. Ignatius Jesuit Retreat House at Inisfada
251 Searingtown Road
Manhasset, NY 11030
516-621-8300 x 25
www.inisfada.net

Supervision for Spiritual Directors
Directied Retreats: Summer 2009
July 5 - 12 ∙ July 15 - 22 ∙ July 24 - 31
Spiritual Exercises Institute:
30 Day Retreat
June 25 - July 31
Guided Retreat: July 31 - August 7
‘The Gift of an Awakened Heart”
Call Karen Doyle, SSJ 516-621-8300 x 25 or
kdoyle@inisfada.net

Let the labyrinth
Awaken your Muse
a transformative urban pilgrimage
with laurel artress
July 24 - 25
grace cathedral
www.veriditas.org

Listen
Publisher: Spiritual Directors International
Executive Director: Liz Budd Ellmann, MDiv
Editor: Pegge Bernecker
Production Supervisor: Tobias Becker
Submissions: listen@sdifworld.org
Advertising: www.sdiworld.org

Listen is published four times a year (January, April, July, October). The names Spiritual Directors International™, SDIWorld™, and SDI™ and its logo are trademarks of Spiritual Directors International, Inc., all rights reserved. Opinions and programs represented in this publication are of the authors and advertisers and may not represent the opinions of Spiritual Directors International, the Coordinating Council, or the editors.
Compassionate listening through spiritual direction or spiritual guidance is a blessing to me because …

“We supply food to that gaping space when we listen. The energy of love makes it possible to be one with all. God’s essence is communicated.” –Rosemarie, New York, USA

“A blessing indeed as I journey with the uncertainty of life with illness. A spiritual director is my non-judgmental companion through dark uncertain times in finding God questioning with me.” –Helena, Ontario, Canada

“The experience of compassionate listening leads me deeper into prayer. The questions, struggles, and faith brought into the sacred space I share with another inspire me to listen more carefully to the movement of the Spirit in my own life.” –Fr. Adam, Illinois, USA

“It is a blessing to me in that it enables me to feel that I am not hiding something from others and there is no fear of someone finding out about me and perhaps not liking me because of what has happened to me.” –Helen, Canberra, Australia

“It helps me hear the voice of God in my ongoing interior journey and allows me to know what to discard in order to see the ever present God more clearly.” –Steve, Minnesota, USA

“Spiritual direction is helpful to me because God sometimes gets mixed up in my projections ... and I am so surprised by compassionate responses to what I'm struggling with. God is not able to communicate with me directly through words ... but my spiritual director gives me a loving presence, a new mirror and different perspective from the one in my head that tends toward harsh judgment and rigidness ... My whole image and relationship with God has softened and changed through the process of spiritual direction.” –Sharie, Washington, USA

“Compassionate listening has allowed me to accept myself—both the good and the less appealing parts of me. Over the last ten years I have come to be a person I had no inkling I could be. I would not be where I am today without spiritual direction” –Mags, South Africa
Chestnut Hill College, spiritual direction is seen as a contemplative ministry through which spiritual directors help others to notice and respond to God's movement in the personal and communal experiences of their everyday lives and within all of creation. Our program fosters a community of learners who seek a more holistic future where mind, body, spirit, and the global community can achieve communion and wholeness.

M.A. in Holistic Spirituality
M.A. in Holistic Spirituality/Healthcare
M.A. in Holistic Spirituality & Spiritual Direction
Certificate in Spiritual Direction
Certificate in Supervision of Spiritual Directors
Certificate of Study in Spirituality
Certificate in Holistic Spirituality/Healthcare
NEW! Certificate in Bereavement Care

Come visit our idyllic campus in suburban Philadelphia!
Call 215.248.7020 for an appointment.
For more information, visit www.chc.edu/graduate
or contact Carolynne Ervin, M.A. at ervinc@chc.edu

30-Day / 8-Day Ignatian Retreats
Spokane, WA • Aug. 1-31, 2010
(509) 448-1224 • IHRC.net

$12.95
Right Listening
Mark Brady, Ph.D.
For info: Paideia@gmail.com
~Paideia Press~
W hat would it be like to live your life in a continual awareness of the holiness of everything? Does that sound like something monks do off in their quiet cells, but too challenging for the busy, frenetic lives we live? And yet, each moment carries with it an invitation to see the sacred, cultivated through contemplative practice. Prayer gets us in the habit of looking below the surface of life.

One of these practices, *lectio divina* (which means sacred reading), is an ancient Christian prayer form being rediscovered and reclaimed in our time. Through it, we are invited to listen deeply to the voice of God with “the ear of our heart,” as St. Benedict wrote in the opening of his Rule 1500 years ago. Through *lectio* we read not for information, but formation, which is a heart centered way of approaching the world.

There are essentially four movements to the process of *lectio divina*. Begin by selecting a text to read (perhaps a favorite scripture passage or a poem) and quieting down your mind. **Read the text** and listen for the word or phrase that is calling to you this day. Sit with it for a few moments, savoring it. Move into reflection and allow the phrase to unfold in your imagination and tend to the *images, feelings, and memories* that are stirred in you. Then listen for the invitation to you in the midst of the circumstances of your life right now. How are you being invited to respond? After holding this in your heart, spend some time resting in silence.

With regular practice, the rhythm of *lectio divina* becomes a part of your way of being in the world. Everything becomes a sacred text, a place to read the invitation being extended to you in each moment. Even in the midst of busy lives, God is still speaking. Are you listening?

—Christine Valters Paintner, PhD, is a Benedictine Oblate and founder of Abbey of the Arts, a nonprofit ministry integrating contemplative practice with the expressive arts. She teaches at Seattle University’s School of Theology and Ministry and works as a spiritual director, retreat facilitator, writer, and artist. She is coauthor of *Lectio Divina: Contemplative Awakening and Awareness* (Paulist Press, 2008). You can e-mail her at Christine@AbbeyOfTheArts.com.
Sunflowers

Petals of sunflowers, borders of golden beauty,
radiance of compassion lifted to sun,
bounty of possibility, delight and hope.

Centers of sunflowers, core of darkness,
weight of dismay,
heavy with weariness and despair.

Sunflowers, outer and inner,
light and dark are we,
tending others in need.

Heart of darkness at sunflower’s center
heart of seeds spills in weariness
onto acquiescent earth.

It is life’s Spirit, rich earth, healing sun,
nourishing rain,
it is life’s Spirit,
that brings forth the new.

Sunflowers, light and dark are we,
tending others in need.

When we release our seeds,
when we seek the unique respite
that serves our souls,
when we breathe into deepest wisdom within,
when we ask
what do I do here,
what do I do now?
Earth’s Spirit answers
in the language
only we can understand,
then can we, who tend others in need,
lift our golden faces
in compassion and celebration
once more.

– Jennifer (Jinks) Hoffmann © 2009
Question: How can I tell if I am called to become a spiritual director? I think I might be, and want to learn about my next steps.

Hoot Hoot: Simply by asking your question you have begun a listening process. This is good! For starters, many people hear about spiritual direction or guidance and something sparks within, beginning the question, “I wonder if I’m called to this ...” or “I could be a spiritual director ...” The very first step for everyone considering this question is to be in a spiritual direction relationship with a spiritual director or guide. Next begins the process of listening, prayer, and discernment. The listening happens within your own heart, your life experience, and in the context of other relationships with people that know you. Be willing to spend some time in this process and to be surprised. Perhaps this spark is rising in you because of an aspect from your existing work life, or simply because you have a compassionate heart and love of God.

Research and discernment of a potential program is important. Talk to your spiritual director about his or her training. Visit the Spiritual Directors International Web site where you will find more than two hundred varied programs offering spiritual direction formation and training. You can use the “Enrichment, Formation, and Training Program Locator” to research various programs. The service is free, and located at www.sdiworld.org in the “resources” section.

You may discover you want a program that includes a summer intensive or distance learning option. Maybe you prefer a formal academic degree that will include your training and education. Perhaps a local program where you will develop ongoing face-to-face relationships with other participants is important. Questions to ask during your research process include:

- What is the spiritual affiliation of the program?
- Describe the length and style of the program.
- What are the costs of the program and application process?
- May I speak to formers students about your program? How can I contact them?

Continue to listen. You do not need to fully know a final outcome before you take your next step in formation or education. The process itself, along with the program teaching team and facilitators will aid in building clarity. Trust the process. Blessings to you as you listen to the inspirations and longings of your heart.

—if you have a question for Owl, please e-mail Listen@sdiworld.org.

Stella Maris Retreat & Renewal Center
A Ministry Sponsored by the Sisters of St. Francis of the Neumann Communities
130 East Genesee Street
Skaneateles, New York 13152
Phone (315) 685-6836; Fax (315) 685-7008
Website: www.stellamarisretreat.org
For additional information contact: Denise Schoeneck

WWW.SDIWORLD.ORG

Listen is an outreach publication of Spiritual Directors International. When you visit the Spiritual Directors International Web site at www.sdiworld.org, you can learn about retreats, programs, conferences, and other events related to spiritual companionship. You can read descriptions of the spiritual direction relationship from a variety of spiritual traditions, and discover excellent questions to ask yourself, and any potential spiritual directors you choose to interview. To locate a spiritual director or guide, go on-line to Seek and Find: A Worldwide Resource Guide of Available Spiritual Directors. More than 6,000 available spiritual directors are listed by geographical location at www.sdiworld.org.
“Tending the holy around the world and across traditions ...
Al servicio de lo sacro alrededor del mundo y a través de las tradiciones ...”

—Translated by Marta Rios and Xavier Ortiz Monasterio